

Chögyam Trungpa quotes (showing 1-30 of 161)

“Enlightenment is ego's ultimate disappointment.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#)

tags: [ego](#), [enlightenment](#)

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“The essence of warriorship, or the essence of human bravery, is refusing to give up on anyone or anything.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#), [Shambhala: The Sacred Path of the Warrior](#)

tags: [warriorship](#)

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“We do not have to be ashamed of what we are. As sentient beings we have wonderful backgrounds. These backgrounds may not be particularly enlightened or peaceful or intelligent. Nevertheless, we have soil good enough to cultivate; we can plant anything in it.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#), [Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

tags: [acceptance](#), [background](#), [confidence](#), [cultivation](#), [development](#), [enlightenment](#), [heritage](#), [humanity](#), [humans](#), [life](#), [mankind](#), [original-sin](#), [origins](#), [pride](#), [progress](#), [sentient-beings](#), [shame](#), [truth](#)

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“If you are a warrior, decency means that you are not cheating anybody at all. You are not even about to cheat anybody. There is a sense of straightforwardness and simplicity. With setting-sun vision, or vision based on cowardice, straightforwardness is always a problem. If people have some story or news to tell somebody else, first of all they are either excited or disappointed. Then they begin to figure out how to tell their news. They develop a plan, which leads them completely away from simply telling it. By the time a person hears the news, it is not news at all, but opinion. It becomes a message of some kind, rather than fresh, straightforward news. Decency is the absence of strategy. It is of utmost importance to realize that the warrior's approach should be simple-minded sometimes, very simple and straightforward. That makes it very beautiful: you having nothing up your sleeve; therefore a sense of genuineness comes through. That is decency.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#)

tags: [decency](#), [genuine](#), [simplicity](#), [straightforwardness](#), [warrior](#)

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“A great deal of the chaos in the world occurs because people don't appreciate themselves.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#), [Shambhala: The Sacred Path of the Warrior](#)

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“When you relate to thoughts obsessively, you are actually feeding them because thoughts need your attention to survive. Once you begin to pay attention to them and categorize them, then they become very powerful. You are feeding them energy because you are not seeing them as simple phenomena. If one tries to quiet them down, that is another way of feeding them.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#), [The Myth of Freedom and the Way of Meditation](#)

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“Becoming "awake" involves seeing our confusion more clearly.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#), [The Myth of Freedom and the Way of Meditation](#)

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“Everyone loves something, even if it's only tortillas.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#)

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“Hold the sadness and pain of samsara in your heart and at the same time the power and vision of the Great Eastern Sun. Then the warrior can make a proper cup of tea.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#)

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“The ideal of warriorship is that the warrior should be sad and tender, and because of that, the warrior can be very brave as well.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#)

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“Are the great spiritual teachings really advocating that we fight evil because we are on the side of light, the side of peace? Are they telling us to fight against that other 'undesirable' side, the bad and the black. That is a big question. If there is wisdom in the sacred teachings, there should not be any war. As long as a person is involved with warfare, trying to defend or attack, then his action is not sacred; it is mundane, dualistic, a battlefield situation.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#), [Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

tags: [attacking](#), [defending](#), [duality](#), [fighting](#), [good-and-evil](#), [good-vs-evil](#), [religion](#), [true-wisdom](#), [war](#), [wisdom](#)

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“Real fearlessness is the product of tenderness. It comes from letting the world tickle your heart, your raw and beautiful heart. You are willing to open up, without resistance or shyness, and face the world. You are willing to share your heart with others.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#)

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“...We leave our homeland, our property and our friends. We give up the familiar ground that supports our ego, admit the helplessness of ego to control its world and secure itself. We give up our clingings to superiority and self-preservation...It means giving up searching for a home, becoming a refugee, a lonely person who must depend on himself...Fundamentally, no one can help us. If we seek to relieve our loneliness, we will be distracted from the path. Instead, we must make a relationship with loneliness until it becomes aloneness.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#), [The Myth of Freedom and the Way of Meditation](#)

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“Delight in itself is the approach of sanity. Delight is to open our eyes to the reality of the situation rather than siding with this or that point of view.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#), [The Myth of Freedom and the Way of Meditation](#)

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“It's easier to put on a pair of shoes than to wrap the earth in leather.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#)

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“Many people try to find a spiritual path where they do not have to face themselves but where they can still liberate themselves--liberate themselves from themselves, in fact. In truth, this is impossible. We cannot do that. We have to be honest with ourselves. We have to see our gut, our real shit, our most undesirable parts. We have to see that. That is the foundation of warriorship and the basis of conquering fear. We have to face our fear; we have to look at it, study it, work with it, and practice meditation with it.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#), [Smile at Fear: Awakening the True Heart of Bravery](#)

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“We must begin our practice by walking the narrow path of simplicity, the hinayana path, before we can walk upon the open highway of compassionate action, the mahayana path.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#), [The Myth of Freedom and the Way of Meditation](#)

tags: [inspirational](#)

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“There are times to cultivate and create, when you nurture your world and give birth to new ideas and ventures. There are times of flourishing and abundance, when life feels in full bloom, energized and expanding. And there are times of fruition, when things come to an end. They have reached their climax and must be harvested before they begin to fade. And finally of course, there are times that are cold, and cutting and empty, times when the spring of new beginnings seems like a distant dream. Those rhythms in life are natural events. They weave into one another as day follows night, bringing, not messages of hope and fear, but messages of how things are.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#)

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“In the process of burning out these confusions, we discover enlightenment. If the process were otherwise, the awakened state of mind would be a product dependent upon cause and effect and therefore liable to dissolution. Anything which is created must, sooner or later, die. If enlightenment were created in such a way, there would always be a possibility of ego reasserting itself, causing a return to the confused state. Enlightenment is permanent because we have not produced it; we have merely discovered it.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#), [Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

tags: [buddhism-is-not-what-you-think](#), [confusion](#), [discovery](#), [enlightenment](#), [philosophy](#), [self-discovery](#)

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“As long as a person is involved with warfare, trying to defend or attack, then his action is not sacred; it is mundane, dualistic, a battlefield situation.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#), [Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

tags: [attacking](#), [defending](#), [duality](#), [fallacy](#), [fighting](#), [sacred](#), [war](#), [warfare](#)

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“This is not to say that the point of the hard way is that we must be heroic. The attitude of "heroism" is based upon the assumption that we are bad, impure, that we are not worthy, are not ready for spiritual understanding. We must reform ourselves, be different from what we are. For instance, if we are middle class Americans, we must give up our jobs or drop out of college, move out of our suburban homes, let our hair grow, perhaps try drugs. If we are hippies, we must give up drugs, cut our hair short, throw away our torn jeans. We think that we are special, heroic, that we are turning away from temptation. We become vegetarians and we become this and that. There are so many things to become. We think our path is spiritual because it is literally against the flow of what we used to be, but it is merely the way of false heroism, and the only one who is heroic in this way is ego.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#), [Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“No matter what the practice or teaching, ego loves to wait in ambush to appropriate spirituality for its own survival and gain.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#), [Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“Q: Why do you think that people are so protective of their egos? Why is it so hard to let go of one's ego? A: People are afraid of the emptiness of space, or the absence of company, the absence of a shadow. It could be a terrifying experience to have no one to relate to, nothing to relate with. The idea of it can be extremely frightening, though not the real experience. It is generally a fear of space, a fear that we will not be able to anchor ourselves to any solid ground, that we will lose our identity as a fixed and solid and definite thing. This could be very threatening.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#), [Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“As in music, when we hear the crescendo building, suddenly if the music stops, we begin to hear the silence as part of the music.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#), [Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

tags: [crescendo](#), [enlightenment](#), [humor](#), [music](#), [silence](#), [silent-music](#), [truth](#), [wisdom](#)

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“As long as you regard yourself or any part of your experience as the "dream come true," then you are involved in self-deception. Self-deception seems always to depend upon the dream world, because you would like to see what you have not yet seen, rather than what you are now seeing. You will not accept that whatever is here now is what is, nor are you willing to go on with the situation as it is. Thus, self-deception always manifests itself in terms of trying to create or recreate a dream world, the nostalgia of the dream experience. And the opposite of self-deception is just working with the facts of life.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#), [Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“We also have to give up the notion of a divine savior, which has nothing to do with what religion we belong to, but refers to the idea of someone or something who will save us without our having to go through any pain. In fact, giving up that kind of false hope is the first step. We have to be with ourselves. We have to be real people. There is no way of beating around the bush, hoping for the best. If you are really interested in working with yourself, you can't lead that kind of double life, adopting ideas, techniques, and concepts of all kinds, simply in order to get away from yourself.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#), [Smile at Fear: Awakening the True Heart of Bravery](#)

tags: [spiritual-materialism](#)

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“If you are involved with the intensity of crescendo situations, with the intensity of tragedy, you might begin to see the humor of these situations as well. As in music, when we hear the crescendo building, suddenly if the music stops, we begin to hear the silence as part of the music.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#), [Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

tags: [acceptance](#), [buddhism](#), [crescendo](#), [enlightenment](#), [humanity](#), [humor](#), [life](#), [mankind](#), [music](#), [silence](#), [silence-in-music](#), [silent-music](#), [tragedy](#), [truth](#)

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“There is a saying in the Tibetan scriptures: “Knowledge must be burned, hammered, and beaten like pure gold. Then one can wear it as an ornament.” So when you receive spiritual instruction from the hands of another, you do not take it uncritically, but you burn it, you hammer it, you beat it, until the bright, dignified color of gold appears. Then you craft it into an ornament, whatever design you like, and you put it on.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#), [Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“Walking the spiritual path properly is a very subtle process; it is not something to jump into naively. There are numerous sidetracks which lead to a distorted, ego-centered version of spirituality; we can deceive ourselves into thinking we are developing spiritually when instead we are strengthening our egocentricity through spiritual techniques. This fundamental distortion may be referred to as spiritual materialism.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#), [Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“According to the Buddhist tradition, the spiritual path is the process of cutting through our confusion, of uncovering the awakened state of mind. When the awakened state of mind is crowded in by ego and its attendant paranoia, it takes on the character of an underlying instinct. So it is not a matter of building up the awakened state of mind, but rather of burning out the confusions which obstruct it. In the process of burning out these confusions, we discover enlightenment.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#), [Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

“When we find ourselves in a situation in which our buttons are being pushed, we can choose to repress or act out, or we can choose to practice. If we can start to do the exchange, breathing in with the intention of keeping our hearts open to the embarrassment or fear or anger that we feel, then to our surprise we find that we are also open to what the other person is feeling. Open heart is open heart.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#)

tags: [anger](#), [emotions](#), [fear](#), [practice](#)

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“Just fully being skillful involves total lack of inhibition. We are not afraid to be. We are not afraid to live. We must accept ourselves as being warriors. If we acknowledge ourselves as warriors, then there is a way in, because a warrior dares to be, like a tiger in the jungle.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#), [The Myth of Freedom and the Way of Meditation](#)

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“Whether we eat, sleep, work, play, whatever we do life contains dissatisfaction, pain. If we enjoy pleasure, we are afraid to lose it; we strive for more and more pleasure or try to contain it. If we suffer pain we want to escape it. We experience dissatisfaction all the time. All activities contain dissatisfaction or pain, continuously.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#)

tags: [buddhism](#), [spirituality](#)

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“When we let go of the self, we are more inspired to work with others; and when we are generous to others, we realize that the self is lost.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#), [The Bodhisattva Path of Wisdom and Compassion \(volume 2\): The Profound Treasury of the Ocean of Dharma](#)

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“Self-evaluation and self-criticism are, basically, neurotic tendencies which derive from our not having enough confidence in ourselves, confidence in the sense of seeing what we are, knowing what we are, knowing that we can afford to open. We can afford to surrender that raw and rugged neurotic quality of self and step out of fascination, step out of preconceived ideas.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#), [Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“Although we may hate ourselves, at the same time we find our self-hatred a kind of occupation. In spite of the fact that we may dislike what we are and find that self-condemnation painful, still we cannot give it up completely. If we begin to give up our self-criticism, then we may feel that we are losing our occupation, as though someone were taking away our job.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#), [Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“You don’t have to rush out to become the mayor of your city or the president of the United States in order to help others, but you can begin with your relatives and friends and the people around you. In fact, you can start with yourself. The important point is to realize that you are never off duty.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#), [Shambhala: The Sacred Path of the Warrior](#)

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“When we are afraid of ourselves and afraid of the seeming threat the world presents, then we become extremely selfish. We want to build our own little nests, our own cocoons, so that we can live by ourselves in a secure way.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#), [Shambhala: The Sacred Path of the Warrior](#)

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“We must surrender our hopes and expectations, as well as our fears, and march directly into disappointment, work with disappointment, go into it, and make it our way of life, which is a very hard thing to do. Disappointment is a good sign of basic intelligence. It cannot be compared to anything else: it is so sharp, precise, obvious, and direct. If we can open, then we suddenly begin to see that our expectations are irrelevant compared with the reality of the situations we are facing.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#)

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“The path of truth is profound—and so are the obstacles and possibilities for self-deception.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#), [Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“Nowness is the sense that we are attuned to what is happening. The past is fiction and the future is a dream, and we are just living on the edge of a razor blade.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#)

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“AS LONG AS we follow a spiritual approach promising salvation, miracles, liberation, then we are bound by the “golden chain of spirituality.” Such a chain might be beautiful to wear, with its inlaid jewels and intricate carvings, but nevertheless, it imprisons us. People think they can wear the golden chain for decoration without being imprisoned by it, but they are deceiving themselves. As long as one’s approach to spirituality is based upon enriching ego, then it is spiritual materialism, a suicidal process rather than a creative one. All the promises we have heard are pure seduction. We expect the teachings to solve all our problems; we expect to be provided with magical means to deal with our depressions, our aggressions, our sexual hangups. But to our surprise we begin to realize that this is not going to happen. It is very disappointing to realize that we must work on ourselves and our suffering rather than depend upon a savior or the magical power of yogic techniques. It is disappointing to realize that we have to give up our expectations rather than build on the basis of our preconceptions. We must allow ourselves to be disappointed, which means the surrendering of me-ness, my achievement. We would like to watch ourselves attain enlightenment, watch our disciples celebrating, worshipping, throwing flowers at us, with miracles and earthquakes occurring and gods and angels singing and so forth. This never happens. The attainment of enlightenment from ego’s point of view is extreme death, the death of self, the death of me and mine, the death of the watcher. It is the ultimate and final disappointment. Treading the spiritual path is painful. It is a constant unmasking, peeling off of layer after layer of masks. It involves insult after insult.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#), [The Myth of Freedom and the Way of Meditation](#)

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“Sense of humor seems to come from all-pervading joy, joy which has room to expand into a completely open situation because it is not involved with the battle between “this” and “that.” Joy develops into the panoramic situation of seeing or feeling the whole ground, the open ground. This open situation has no hint of limitation, of imposed solemnity. And if you do try to treat life as a “serious business,” if you try to impose solemnity upon life as though everything is a big deal, then it is funny. Why such a big deal?”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#), [Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“You see, the whole point is that if we are speaking of a way out all the time, then we are dealing in fantasy, the dream of escape, salvation, enlightenment. We need to be practical. We must examine what is here, now, our neurotic mind. Once we are completely familiar with the negative aspects of the state of our being, then we know the “way out” automatically. But if we talk about how beautiful and joyous our attainment of the goal will be, then we become extremely sincere and romantic; and this approach becomes an obstacle.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#), [Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“You begin to notice what it is that makes this person a teacher, beyond the limits of his individuality and personality. Thus the principle of the “universality of the guru” comes into the picture as well. Every problem you face in life is a part of your marriage. Whenever you experience difficulties, you hear the words of the guru. This is the point at which one begins to gain one’s independence from the guru as lover, because every situation becomes an expression of the teachings. First you surrendered to your spiritual friend. Then you communicated and played games with him. And now you have come to the state of complete openness. As a result of this openness you begin to see the guru-quality in every life-situation, that all situations in life offer you the opportunity to be as open as you are with the guru, and so all things can become the guru.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#), [Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“THERE ARE SEASONS in your life in the same way as there are seasons in nature. There are times to cultivate and create, when you nurture your world and give birth to new ideas and ventures. There are times of flourishing and abundance, when life feels in full bloom, energized and expanding. And there are times of fruition, when things come to an end. They have reached their climax and must be harvested before they begin to fade. And finally, of course, there are times that are cold and cutting and empty, times when the spring of new beginnings seems like a distant dream. Those rhythms in life are natural events. They weave into one another as day follows night, bringing, not messages of hope and fear, but messages of how things are.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Ocean of Dharma: The Everyday Wisdom of Chogyam Trungpa](#)

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“We cannot be truly peaceful unless we have the invincible quality of peace within us; a feeble or temporary peacefulness could always be disturbed. If we try to be kind and peaceful in a naive way, encountering a different or unexpected situation might interfere with our awareness of peace because that peace has no strength in it, has no character. So peace must be stable, deeprooted, and solid.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“Q: How do you take off your suit of armor? How do you open yourself? A: It is not a question of how you do it. There is no ritual or ceremony or formula for opening. The first obstacle is the question itself: “How?” If you don’t question yourself, don’t watch yourself, then you just do it. We do not consider how we are going to vomit; we just vomit. There is no time to think about it; it just happens. If we are very tense, then we will have tremendous pain and will not really be able to vomit properly. We will try to swallow it back, try to struggle with our illness. We have to learn to relax when we are sick.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“IT WOULD BE interesting to examine this subject in terms of what is not a sense of humor. Lack of humor seems to come from the attitude of the “hard fact.” Things are very hard and deadly honest, deadly serious, like, to use an analogy, a living corpse. He lives in pain, has a continual expression of pain on his face. He has experienced some kind of hard fact—“reality”—he is deadly serious and has gone so far as to become a living corpse. The rigidity of this living corpse expresses the opposite of a sense of humor. It is as though somebody is standing behind you with a sharp sword. If you are not meditating properly, sitting still and upright, there will be someone behind you just about to strike. Or if you are not dealing with life properly, honestly, directly, someone is just about to hit you. This is the self-consciousness of watching yourself, observing yourself unnecessarily. Whatever we do is constantly being watched and censored. Actually it is not Big Brother who is watching; it is Big Me! Another aspect of me is watching me, behind me, just about to strike, just about to pinpoint my failure. There is no joy in this approach, no sense of humor at all.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“They were the good old days. Don't give up hope in the bad new days, which will become the good old days. We appreciate [Kennedy](#) because he was killed; [Martin Luther King](#) was a great man. If you'd meet [Naropa](#) or [Tilopa](#) on the spot you'd be pissed off. History is very deceptive, reality is more important. There is a piece of philosophy for you.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, The Great River of Blessings: The Rinchen Terdzö in Orissa, India](#)

tags: [1974](#), [buddhism](#), [history](#), [perspective](#), [time](#)

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“In order to establish a real teacher-student relationship it is necessary for us to give up all our preconceptions regarding that relationship and the condition of opening and surrender. Surrender means opening oneself completely, trying to get beyond fascination and expectation.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“The idea is not to regard the spiritual path as something very luxurious and pleasurable but to see it as just facing the facts of life.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“If you pour a cup of tea, you are aware of extending your arm and touching your hand to the teapot, lifting it and pouring the water. Finally the water touches your teacup and fills it, and you stop pouring and put the teapot down precisely, as in the Japanese tea ceremony. You become aware that each precise movement has dignity. We have long forgotten that activities can be simple and precise. Every act of our lives can contain simplicity and precision and can thus have tremendous beauty and dignity.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“The point of meditation is not merely to be an honest or good person in the conventional sense, trying only to maintain our security. We must begin to become compassionate and wise in the fundamental sense, open and relating to the world as it is.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“Whenever thoughts arise, just observe them as thoughts and label them “thinking.” What usually happens when we have thoughts is that we absorb ourselves and cease to be aware that we are thinking at all. One should try not to suppress thoughts in meditation, but just try to see their transitory nature, their translucent nature. We do not become involved in them or reject them, but simply acknowledge them and then come back to the awareness of breathing. There should be no deliberate effort to control and no attempt to be peaceful. Our thoughts simply cease to be the VIPS in our lives. On the other hand, there is no implication that by sitting and meditating, coming back to the breath, we have found a way to avoid problems, an escape from one point to another. Meditation is not a quick cure or cover-up for the complicated or embarrassing aspects of ourselves. It is a way of life. It is extremely important to persist in our practice without second-guessing ourselves through disappointments, elations, or whatever. We might actually begin to see the world we carry with us in a more open, refreshing way. Meditation is very much a matter of exercise, a working practice. It is not a matter of going into some imaginary depth, but of widening and expanding outward.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, The Truth of Suffering and the Path of Liberation](#)

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“Our vast collections of knowledge and experience are just part of ego’s display, part of the grandiose quality of ego. We display them to the world and, in so doing, reassure ourselves that we exist, safe and secure, as “spiritual” people.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“But, if we regard knowledge as an antique, as “ancient wisdom” to be collected, then we are on the wrong path.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“In the story of the Buddha’s life we hear of the temptations of Mara, which are extremely subtle. The first temptation is fear of physical destruction. The last is the seduction by the daughters of Mara. This seduction, the seduction of spiritual materialism, is extremely powerful because it is the seduction of thinking that “I” have achieved something. If we think we have achieved something, that we have “made it,” then we have been seduced by Mara’s daughters, the seduction of spiritual materialism.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“Q: When emotions are transmuted, that doesn’t mean they disappear, does it? A: Not necessarily, but they are transmuted into other forms of energy. If we are trying to be good or peaceful, trying to suppress or subdue our emotions, that is the basic twist of ego in operation. We are being aggressive

toward our emotions, trying forcefully to achieve peace or goodness. Once we cease being aggressive toward our emotions, cease trying to change them, once we experience them properly, then transmutation may take place. The irritating quality of the emotions is transmuted once you experience them as they are. Transmutation does not mean that the energy quality of the emotions is eliminated; in fact it is transformed into wisdom, which is very much needed.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“We must try to think beyond our homes, beyond the fire burning in the fireplace, beyond sending our children to school or getting to work in the morning. We must try to think how we can help this world. If we don’t help, nobody will. It is our turn to help the world.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Shambhala: The Sacred Path of the Warrior](#)

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“Shambhala vision teaches that in the face of the world’s great problems, we can be heroic and kind at the same time.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Shambhala: The Sacred Path of the Warrior](#)

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“Or we might even succeed at some form of dualistic concentration practice and experience a kind of “mystical state.” In such cases we might appear quite tranquil and religious in the conventional sense. But we would constantly have to charge up and maintain our “mystical state” and there would be a continual sense of appreciation, the repeated act of checking and indulging in our achievement. This is the typical distortion of the hinayana practice of self-contained meditation, self-enlightenment, and it is in some sense a form of aggression. There is no element of compassion and openness because one is so focused on one’s own experience.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“The Hard Way INASMUCH AS no one is going to save us, to the extent that no one is going magically to enlighten us, the path we are discussing is called the “hard way.” This path does not conform to our expectation that involvement with the Buddhist teaching will be gentle, peaceful, pleasant, compassionate. It is the hard way, a simple meeting of two minds: if you open your mind, if you are willing to meet, then the teacher opens his mind as well. It is not a question of magic; the condition of openness is a mutual creation.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“Sense of humor means seeing both poles of a situation as they are, from an aerial point of view. There is good and there is bad and you see both with a panoramic view as though from above. Then you begin to feel that these little people on the ground, killing each other or making love or just being little people, are very insignificant in the sense that, if they begin to make a big deal of their warfare or lovemaking, then we begin to see the ironic aspect of their clamor. If we try very hard to build something tremendous, really meaningful, powerful—“I’m really searching for something, I’m really trying to fight my faults,” or “I’m really trying to be good”—then it loses its seriousness, becomes a paper tiger; it is extremely ironic.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“The process of receiving teaching depends upon the student giving something in return; some kind of psychological surrender is necessary, a gift of some sort. This is why we must discuss surrendering, opening, giving up expectations, before we can speak of the relationship between teacher and student. It is essential to surrender, to open yourself, to present whatever you are to the guru, rather than trying to present yourself as a worthwhile student. It does not matter how much you are willing to pay, how correctly you behave, how clever you are at saying the right thing to your teacher. It is not like having an interview for a job or buying a new car. Whether or not you will get the job depends upon your credentials, how well you are dressed, how beautifully your shoes are polished, how well you speak,

how good your manners are. If you are buying a car, it is a matter of how much money you have and how good your credit is. But when it comes to spirituality, something more is required. It is not a matter of applying for a job, of dressing up to impress our potential employer. Such deception does not apply to an interview with a guru, because he sees right through us. He is amused if we dress up especially for the interview. Making ingratiating gestures is not applicable in this situation; in fact it is futile. We must make a real commitment to being open with our teacher; we must be willing to give up all our preconceptions. Milarepa expected Marpa to be a great scholar and a saintly person, dressed in yogic costume with beads, reciting mantras, meditating. Instead he found Marpa working on his farm, directing the laborers and plowing his land. I am afraid the word guru is overused in the West. It would be better to speak of one's "spiritual friend," because the teachings emphasize a mutual meeting of two minds. It is a matter of mutual communication, rather than a master-servant relationship between a highly evolved being and a miserable, confused one. In the master-servant relationship the highly evolved being may appear not even to be sitting on his seat but may seem to be floating, levitating, looking down at us. His voice is penetrating, pervading space. Every word, every cough, every movement that he makes is a gesture of wisdom. But this is a dream. A guru should be a spiritual friend who communicates and presents his qualities to us, as Marpa did with Milarepa and Naropa with Marpa. Marpa presented his quality of being a farmer-yogi. He happened to have seven children and a wife, and he looked after his farm, cultivating the land and supporting himself and his family. But these activities were just an ordinary part of his life. He cared for his students as he cared for his crops and family. He was so thorough, paying attention to every detail of his life, that he was able to be a competent teacher as well as a competent father and farmer. There was no physical or spiritual materialism in Marpa's lifestyle at all. He did not emphasize spirituality and ignore his family or his physical relationship to the earth. If you are not involved with materialism, either spiritually or physically, then there is no emphasis made on any extreme. Nor is it helpful to choose someone for your guru simply because he is famous, someone who is renowned for having published stacks of books and converted thousands or millions of people. Instead the guideline is whether or not you are able actually to communicate with the person, directly and thoroughly. How much self-deception are you involved in? If you really open yourself to your spiritual friend, then you are bound to work together. Are you able to talk to him thoroughly and properly? Does he know anything about you? Does he know anything about himself, for that matter? Is the guru really able to see through your masks, communicate with you properly, directly? In searching for a teacher, this seems to be the guideline rather than fame or wisdom."

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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"Thus openness and surrendering are the necessary preparation for working with a spiritual friend. We acknowledge our fundamental richness rather than bemoan the imagined poverty of our being. We know we are worthy to receive the teachings, worthy of relating ourselves to the wealth of the opportunities for learning."

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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"Fundamentally there is just open space, the basic ground, what we really are. Our most fundamental state of mind, before the creation of ego, is such that there is basic openness, basic freedom, a spacious quality; and we have now and have always had this openness. Take, for example, our everyday lives and thought patterns. When we see an object, in the first instant there is a sudden perception which has no logic or conceptualization to it at all; we just perceive the thing in the open ground. Then immediately we panic and begin to rush about trying to add something to it, either trying to find a name for it or trying to find pigeonholes in which we could locate and categorize it. Gradually things develop from there. This development does not take the shape of a solid entity. Rather, this development is illusory, the mistaken belief in a "self" or "ego." Confused mind is inclined to view itself as a solid, ongoing thing, but it is only a collection of tendencies, events."

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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"The beginning point is that there is open space, belonging to no one. There is always primordial intelligence connected with the space and openness. Vidya, which means "intelligence" in Sanskrit—precision, sharpness, sharpness with space, sharpness with room in which to put things, exchange

things. It is like a spacious hall where there is room to dance about, where there is no danger of knocking things over or tripping over things, for there is completely open space. We are this space, we are one with it, with vidya, intelligence, and openness. But if we are this all the time, where did the confusion come from, where has the space gone, what has happened? Nothing has happened, as a matter of fact. We just became too active in that space. Because it is spacious, it brings inspiration to dance about; but our dance became a bit too active, we began to spin more than was necessary to express the space. At this point we became self-conscious, conscious that “I” am dancing in the space. At such a point, space is no longer space as such. It becomes solid. Instead of being one with the space, we feel solid space as a separate entity, as tangible. This is the first experience of duality—space and I, I am dancing in this space, and this spaciousness is a solid, separate thing. Duality means “space and I,” rather than being completely one with the space. This is the birth of “form,” of “other.” Then a kind of blackout occurs, in the sense that we forget what we were doing. There is a sudden halt, a pause; and we turn around and “discover” solid space, as though we had never before done anything at all, as though we were not the creators of all that solidity. There is a gap. Having already created solidified space, then we are overwhelmed by it and begin to become lost in it. There is a blackout and then, suddenly, an awakening. When we awaken, we refuse to see the space as openness, refuse to see its smooth and ventilating quality. We completely ignore it, which is called avidya. A means “negation,” vidya means “intelligence,” so it is “un-intelligence.” Because this extreme intelligence has been transformed into the perception of solid space, because this intelligence with a sharp and precise and flowing luminous quality has become static, therefore it is called avidya, “ignorance.” We deliberately ignore. We are not satisfied just to dance in the space but we want to have a partner, and so we choose the space as our partner. If you choose space as your partner in the dance, then of course you want it to dance with you. In order to possess it as a partner, you have to solidify it and ignore its flowing, open quality. This is avidya, ignorance, ignoring the intelligence.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“Unfortunately there are many kinds of psychotherapy and many psychotherapists involved with trying to prove themselves and their own theories rather than working with what is. In fact they find it very frightening to work with what is.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“WE HAVE COME here to learn about spirituality. I trust the genuine quality of this search but we must question its nature. The problem is that ego can convert anything to its own use, even spirituality. Ego is constantly attempting to acquire and apply the teachings of spirituality for its own benefit. The teachings are treated as an external thing, external to “me,” a philosophy which we try to imitate. We do not actually want to identify with or become the teachings. So if our teacher speaks of renunciation of ego, we attempt to mimic renunciation of ego. We go through the motions, make the appropriate gestures, but we really do not want to sacrifice any part of our way of life. We become skillful actors, and while playing deaf and dumb to the real meaning of the teachings, we find some comfort in pretending to follow the path.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“There are many, many details of action involved in the simplicity and sharpness of being in this very moment, here, now.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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— [Chögyam Trungpa, Shambhala: The Sacred Path of the Warrior](#)

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“IN DISCUSSING SHUNYATA, we found that we impose our preconceptions, our ideas, our version of things onto phenomena instead of seeing things as they are. Once we are able to see through our veil of preconception, we realize that it is an unnecessary and confused way of attaching handles to experiences without considering whether the handles fit or not. In other words, preconceptions are a

form of security. When we see something, immediately we name it and place it in a category. But form is empty; it does not need our categorizations to express its full nature, to be what it is. Form is in itself empty of preconception.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“The key to warriorship and the first principle of Shambhala vision is not being afraid of who you are. Ultimately, that is the definition of bravery: not being afraid of yourself.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Shambhala: The Sacred Path of the Warrior](#)

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“One of the problems of spiritual searching is that we tend to feel that we can help ourselves purely by reading a lot and practicing by ourselves, not associating ourselves with a particular lineage. Without a teacher to surrender to, without an object of devotion, we cannot free ourselves from spiritual materialism.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, The Myth of Freedom and the Way of Meditation](#)

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“But finally we begin to question what spirituality means really. Is it simply a matter of attempting to be religious, pious, and good? Or is it trying to know more than other people, trying to learn more about the significance of life? What does it really mean, spirituality? The familiar theories of our family church and its doctrine are always available, but somehow these are not the answers we seek; they are a bit too ineffective, not applicable. So we fall away from the doctrines and dogmas of the religion we were born to.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“The idea is that when the teaching begins to happen, it is an experience—but experience needs language, and at the same time, language needs experience.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, The Tantric Path of Indestructible Wakefulness \(volume 3\): The Profound Treasury of the Ocean of Dharma](#)

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“In tantric practice one identifies with a yidam of a particular buddha family corresponding to one’s nature. For instance, if a yidam is associated with the ratna family, then he will be yellow in color and have symbolism characteristic of ratna. The types of mandalas given to you by your teacher depend upon the family to which you belong, whether you belong to the passionate family or the family of pride, or whether you have the quality of air or water in you. Generally one can feel that certain people have the quality of earth and solidness, and certain people have the quality of air, rushing here and there, and other people have the quality of warmth and a presence connected with fire. The mandalas are given to you so that you can identify yourself with your particular emotions which have the potential of transmuting into wisdom.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“You do not have to regard the watcher as a villain. Once you begin to understand that the purpose of meditation is not to get higher but to be present, here, then the watcher is not efficient enough to perform that function, and it automatically falls away. The basic quality of the watcher is to try to be extremely efficient and active. But total awareness is something you already have, so ambitious or so-called efficient attempts to be aware are self-defeating. As the watcher begins to realize that it is irrelevant, it falls away.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“So a sense of humor is not merely a matter of trying to tell jokes or make puns, trying to be funny in a deliberate fashion. It involves seeing the basic irony of the juxtaposition of extremes, so that one is not caught taking them seriously, so that one does not seriously play their game of hope and fear. This is why the experience of the spiritual path is so significant, why the practice of meditation is the most

insignificant experience of all.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“The basic point of the lion’s roar is that, if we are able to deal with emotions directly, able to relate with them as workable, then there is no need for external aid or explanations. It is a self-maintained situation. Any help from outsiders becomes credentials. So self-existing help develops. At that point, one does not need to avoid the credential problem any more, because there is no room for speculation or rationalization. Everything becomes obvious and immediate, workable. And there is no chance or time or space to speculate on how to become a charlatan, how to con other people, because the situation is so immediate. So the idea of charlatanism does not appear at all, because there is no room for the idea of a game.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, The Myth of Freedom and the Way of Meditation](#)

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“Generosity is a willingness to give, to open without philosophical or pious or religious motives, just simply doing what is required at any moment in any situation, not being afraid to receive anything.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“Fundamental security comes from realizing that you have broken through something. You reflect back and realize that you used to be extraordinarily paranoid and neurotic, watching each step you made, thinking you might lose your sanity, that situations were always threatening in some way. Now you are free of all those fears and preconceptions. You discover that you have something to give rather than having to demand from others, having to grasp all the time. For the first time, you are a rich person, you contain basic sanity. You have something to offer, you are able to work with your fellow sentient beings, you do not have to reassure yourself anymore. Reassurance implies a mentality of poverty--you are checking yourself, "Do I have it? How could I do it?" But the bodhisattva's delight in his richness is based upon experience rather than theory or wishful thinking. It is so, directly, fundamentally. He is fundamentally rich and so can delight in generosity.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#)

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“Warriorship is a continual journey. To be a warrior is to learn to be genuine in every moment of your life.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Shambhala: The Sacred Path of the Warrior](#)

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“Transcendental generosity is generally misunderstood in the study of the Buddhist scriptures as meaning being kind to someone who is lower than you. Someone has this pain and suffering and you are in a superior position and can save them—which is a very simple-minded way of looking down on someone. But in the case of the bodhisattva, generosity is not so callous. It is something very strong and powerful; it is communication.

Communication must transcend irritation, otherwise it will be like trying to make a comfortable bed in a briar patch. The penetrating qualities of external color, energy, and light will come toward us, penetrating our attempts to communicate like a thorn pricking our skin. We will wish to subdue this intense irritation and our communication will be blocked.

Communication must be radiation and receiving and exchange. Whenever irritation is involved, then we are not able to see properly and fully and clearly the spacious quality of that which is coming toward us, that which is presenting itself as communication. The external world is immediately rejected by our irritation which says, “no, no, this irritates me, go away.” Such an attitude is the complete opposite of transcendental generosity.

So the bodhisattva must experience the complete communication of generosity, transcending irritation and self-defensiveness. Otherwise, when thorns threaten to prick us, we feel that we are being attacked, that we must defend ourselves. We run away from the tremendous opportunity for

communication that has been given to us, and we have not been brave enough even to look to the other shore of the river. We are looking back and trying to run away.

Generosity is a willingness to give, to open without philosophical or pious or religious motives, just simply doing what is required at any moment in any situation, not being afraid to receive anything. Opening could take place in the middle of a highway. We are not afraid that smog and dust or people's hatreds and passions will overwhelm us; we simply open, completely surrender, give. This means that we do not judge, do not evaluate. If we attempt to judge or evaluate our experience, if we try to decide to what extent we should open, to what extent we should remain closed, the openness will have no meaning at all and the idea of paramita, of transcendental generosity, will be in vain. Our action will not transcend anything, will cease to be the act of a bodhisattva.

The whole implication of the idea of transcendence is that we see through the limited notions, the limited conceptions, the warfare mentality of this as opposed to that. Generally, when we look at an object, we do not allow ourselves to see it properly. Automatically we see our version of the object instead of actually seeing the object as it is. Then we are quite satisfied, because we have manufactured or own version of the thing within ourselves. Then we comment on it, we judge, we take or reject; but there is on real communication going on at all.

Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism, p.167, Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#)

tags: [generosity](#), [irritation](#)

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“Marpa was just an ordinary person, involved in living every detail of his life. He never tried to be someone special. When he lost his temper, he just lost it and beat people. He just did it. He never acted or pretended. Religious fanatics, on the other hand, are always trying to live up to some model of how it all is supposed to be. They try to win people over by coming on very strong and frantic, as though they were completely pure and good. But I think that attempting to prove that you are good indicates fear of some kind. Marpa, however, had nothing to prove. He was just a very sane and ordinary solid citizen, and a very enlightened person at the same time. In fact, he is the father of the whole Kagyü lineage. All the teachings we are studying and practicing spring from him.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#), [Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“The author presents practical advice, but not quick fixes. He is trying to help us fundamentally transform our lives and our perceptions so that we can conquer fear, not simply suppress it for a time. To become truly fearless, he suggests, we must stop running from our fear and begin to make friends with it. We must learn to smile at fear.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#), [Smile at Fear: Awakening the True Heart of Bravery](#)

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“Many approaches to spirituality and to life in general are influenced by cowardice. If you are afraid of seeing yourself, you may use spirituality or religion as a way of looking at yourself without seeing anything about yourself at all. When people are embarrassed by themselves, there is no fearlessness involved. However, if someone is willing to look at himself or herself, to explore and practice wakefulness on the spot, he or she is a warrior. “Warrior”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#), [Smile at Fear: Awakening the True Heart of Bravery](#)

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“Warrior” here is a translation of the Tibetan word pawo. Pa means “brave,” and wo makes it “a person who is brave.” The warrior tradition we are discussing is a tradition of bravery. You might have the idea of a warrior as someone who wages war. But in this case, we are not talking about warriors as those who engage in warfare. Warriorship here refers to fundamental bravery and fearlessness. Warriorship”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#), [Smile at Fear: Awakening the True Heart of Bravery](#)

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“Where does fear come from? It comes from basic bewilderment. Where does basic bewilderment come from? It comes from being unable to harmonize or synchronize mind and body.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Smile at Fear: Awakening the True Heart of Braver](#)

“So the problem begins in a very simple way. When body and mind are unsynchronized, you feel like a caricature of yourself, almost like a primordial idiot or a clown. In that situation, it is very difficult to relate to the rest of the world. That”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Smile at Fear: Awakening the True Heart of Bravery](#)

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“We also have to give up the notion of a divine savior, which has nothing to do with what religion we belong to, but refers to the idea of someone or something who will save us without our having to go through any pain. In fact, giving up that kind of false hope is the first step. We have to be with ourselves. We have to be real people. There is no way of beating around the bush, hoping for the best. If you are really interested in working with yourself, you can’t lead that kind of double life, adopting ideas, techniques, and concepts of all kinds, simply in order to get away from yourself. That is what we call spiritual materialism: hoping that you can have a nice sleep, under anesthetics, and by the time you awaken, everything will be sewn up. Everything will be healed. In that case, you do not have to go through any pain or problems. In”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Smile at Fear: Awakening the True Heart of Bravery](#)

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“The Root Text of the Seven Points of Training the Mind, and on the commentary by Jamgön Kongtrül.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Training the Mind and Cultivating Loving-Kindness](#)

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“Insofar as the Ultimate, or the true nature of being is concerned, there are neither Buddhas nor demons. He who frees himself from fear and hope, evil and virtue, will realize the insubstantial and groundless nature of confusion. Samsara will then appear to be the Mahamudra itself. . . .”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“So vipashyana experience and practice is absolutely necessary for a person who follows the Buddhist path and really wants to understand the dharma.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, The Path of Individual Liberation \(volume 1\): The Profound Treasury of the Ocean of Dharma](#)

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“Suppose in the beginning there is an open plain without any mountains or trees, completely open land, a simple desert without any particular characteristics. That is how we are, what we are. We are very simple and basic. And yet there is a sun shining, a moon shining, and there will be lights and colors, the texture of the desert. There will be some feeling of the energy which plays between heaven and earth. This goes on and on. Then, strangely, there is suddenly someone to notice all this. It is as if one of the grains of sand had stuck its neck out and begun to look around. We are that grain of sand, coming to the conclusion of our separateness. This is the “birth of ignorance” in its first stage, a kind of chemical reaction. Duality has begun.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“You have to meet yourself, to know who you are and what you are. Without vipashyana experience, you don’t have any idea of who you are, what you are, how you are, or why you are, at all!”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, The Path of Individual Liberation \(volume 1\): The Profound Treasury of the Ocean of Dharma](#)

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“Generally, when we speak of freedom or liberation or spiritual understanding, we think that to attain these things we need do nothing at all, that someone else will take care of us. “You are all right, don’t worry, don’t cry, you’re going to be all right. I’ll take care of you.” We tend to think that all we have

to do is make a commitment to the organization, pay our initiation fee, sign the register, and then follow the instructions given us. “I am firmly convinced that your organization is valid, it answers all my questions. You may program me in any way. If you want to put me into difficult situations, do so. I leave everything to you.” This attitude supplies the comfort of having to do nothing but follow orders. Everything is left to the other person, to instruct you and relieve you of your shortcomings. But to our surprise things do not work that way. The idea that we do not have to do anything on our own is extremely wishful thinking.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“Joy develops into the panoramic situation of seeing or feeling the whole ground, the open ground. This open situation has no hint of limitation, of imposed solemnity. And if you do try to treat life as a “serious business,” if you try to impose solemnity upon life as though everything is a big deal, then it is funny. Why such a big deal?”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“Form is no different from emptiness—things do exist in their own right without your judgments, preconceptions, and so forth. [When we drop those,] we begin to see in a very direct way, a straightforward, literal way. The colors are not called red, white, blue, but they are as they are. If we don’t name them, conceptualize them, they become much redder, bluer, and whiter, and so forth. That seems to be the idea of the shunyata principle: seeing things as they are. But there is the problem of the possibility”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, The Lion's Roar: An Introduction to Tantra](#)

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“As a student who has no idea of dharma and no mind training, you decide to commit to the path and to train yourself. As you train your mind, you begin to see all kinds of things. What you see is not so much the inspiration of a glimpse of enlightenment, or buddha nature. Instead, the first thing you see is what is wrong with samsara.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, The Path of Individual Liberation \(volume 1\): The Profound Treasury of the Ocean of Dharma](#)

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“We need only drop the effort to secure and solidify ourselves and the awakened state is present. But we soon realize that just “letting go” is only possible for short periods. We need some discipline to bring us to “letting be.” We must walk a spiritual path. Ego must wear itself out like an old shoe, journeying from suffering to liberation.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“But meditation is a life’s work. You cease to sit and meditate in this life when the last breath runs out of your body on your deathbed.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, The Path of Individual Liberation \(volume 1\): The Profound Treasury of the Ocean of Dharma](#)

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“A sense of knowing, or seeing, always happens. If you are willing to acknowledge its existence, there is the potential of being wakeful, open, and precisely there constantly. This is not based on being a sharp person, a smart person, or a very careful person. Rather, it is about being a person who can actually be—by yourself, very simply.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, The Path of Individual Liberation \(volume 1\): The Profound Treasury of the Ocean of Dharma](#)

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“The practice of meditation is not so much concerned with the hypothetical attainment of enlightenment, but with leading a good life. In order to learn how to lead a good life, a spotless life, you need continual awareness that relates with life constantly, directly, and very simply.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, The Path of Individual Liberation \(volume 1\): The Profound Treasury of the Ocean of Dharma](#)

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“If we do not know the material with which we are working, then our study is useless; speculations about the goal become mere fantasy. These speculations may take the form of advanced ideas and descriptions of spiritual experiences, but they only exploit the weaker aspects of human nature, our expectations and desires to see and hear something colorful, something extraordinary. If we begin our study with these dreams of extraordinary, “enlightening,” and dramatic experiences, then we will build up our expectations and preconceptions so that later, when we are actually working on the path, our minds will be occupied largely with what will be rather than with what is. It is destructive and not fair to people to play on their weaknesses, their expectations and dreams, rather than to present the realistic starting point of what they are.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“It is as if one of the grains of sand had stuck its neck out and begun to look around. We are that grain of sand, coming to the conclusion of our separateness. This is the “birth of ignorance” in its first stage, a kind of chemical reaction. Duality has begun. The second stage of ignorance-form is called “the ignorance born within.” Having noticed that one is separate, then there is the feeling that one has always been so. It is an awkwardness, the instinct toward self-consciousness. It is also one’s excuse for remaining separate, an individual grain of sand. It is an aggressive type of ignorance, though not exactly aggressive in the sense of anger; it has not developed as far as that. Rather it is aggression in the sense that one feels awkward, unbalanced, and so one tries to secure one’s ground, create a shelter for oneself. It is the attitude that one is a confused and separate individual, and that is all there is to it. One has identified oneself as separate from the basic landscape of space and openness. The third type of ignorance is “self-observing ignorance,” watching oneself. There is a sense of seeing oneself as an external object, which leads to the first notion of “other.” One is beginning to have a relationship with a so-called external world. This is why these three stages of ignorance constitute the skandha of form-ignorance; one is beginning to create the world of forms. When we speak of “ignorance” we do not mean stupidity at all. In a sense, ignorance is very intelligent, but it is a completely two-way intelligence. That is to say, one purely reacts to one’s projections rather than just seeing what is. There is no situation of “letting be” at all, because one is ignoring what one is all the time. That is the basic definition of ignorance.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“The last stage of the development of ego is the fifth skandha, consciousness. At this level an amalgamation takes place: the intuitive intelligence of the second skandha, the energy of the third, and the intellectualization of the fourth combine to produce thoughts and emotions. Thus at the level of the fifth skandha we find the six realms as well as the uncontrollable and illogical patterns of discursive thought. This is the complete picture of ego. It is in this state that all of us have arrived at our study of Buddhist psychology and meditation.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“The whole idea is that these yidams must not be regarded as external gods who will save you, but they are expressions of your true nature. You identify yourself with the attributes and colors of particular yidams and feel the sound that comes from the mantra so that finally you begin to realize that your true nature is invincible. You become completely one with the yidam.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“The sitting practice of meditation is regarded as one of the most profound and fundamental disciplines you could ever achieve. By doing this practice, you find that you become less crazy. You begin to develop more humor, more relaxation, and ultimately, more mindfulness.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, The Path of Individual Liberation \(volume 1\): The Profound Treasury of the Ocean of Dharma](#)

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“Usually our feelings of being exploited and other complaints of that nature are merely the squealing of ego and nothing more.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, The Bodhisattva Path of Wisdom and Compassion \(volume 2\): The Profound Treasury of the Ocean of Dharma](#)

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“Ego must wear itself out like an old shoe, journeying from suffering to liberation.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“Whenever we begin to feel any discrepancy or conflict between our actions and the teachings, we immediately interpret the situation in such a way that the conflict is smoothed over. The interpreter is ego in the role of spiritual adviser. The situation is like that of a country where church and state are separate. If the policy of the state is foreign to the teachings of the church, then the automatic reaction of the king is to go to the head of the church, his spiritual adviser, and ask his blessing. The head of the church then works out some justification and gives the policy his blessing under the pretense that the king is the protector of the faith. In an individual’s mind, it works out very neatly that way, ego being both king and head of the church.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“When we speak of “ignorance” we do not mean stupidity at all. In a sense, ignorance is very intelligent, but it is a completely two-way intelligence. That is to say, one purely reacts to one’s projections rather than just seeing what is. There is no situation of “letting be” at all, because one is ignoring what one is all the time. That is the basic definition of ignorance.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“The Heart Sutra ends with “the great spell” or mantra. It says in the Tibetan version: “Therefore the mantra of transcendent knowledge, the mantra of deep insight, the unsurpassed mantra, the unequalled mantra, the mantra which calms all suffering, should be known as truth, for there is no deception.” The potency of this mantra comes not from some imagined mystical or magical power of the words but from their meaning. It”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“The ultimate implication of the words “peace on earth” is to remove altogether the ideas of peace and war and to open yourself equally and completely to the positive and negative aspects of the world.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“the yidam is the expression of one’s own basic nature, visualized as a divine form in order to relate with it and express its full potentiality.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, The Tibetan Book of the Dead: The Great Liberation through Hearing in the Bardo](#)

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“Sacred outlook is not only about thinking everything is good; it is the absence of imprisonment. You begin to experience freedom that is intrinsically good, almost unconditionally free. So the vajra world you are entering is basically good, unconditionally free, fundamentally glorious and splendid.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, The Tantric Path of Indestructible Wakefulness \(volume 3\): The Profound Treasury of the Ocean of Dharma](#)

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“Altogether, the idea of meditation is not to create states of ecstasy or absorption, but to experience being.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, The Path of Individual Liberation \(volume 1\): The Profound Treasury of the Ocean of Dharma](#)

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“The skandhas present a complete picture of ego. According to Buddhist psychology, the ego is simply a collection of skandhas or heaps—but actually there is no such thing as ego. It is a brilliant work of art, a product of the intellect, which says, “Let’s give all this a name. Let’s call it ‘I.’”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, The Path of Individual Liberation \(volume 1\): The Profound Treasury of the Ocean of Dharma](#)

“AT THIS POINT we may have come to the conclusion that we should drop the whole game of spiritual materialism; that is, we should give up trying to defend and improve ourselves. We may have glimpsed that our struggle is futile and may wish to surrender, to completely abandon our efforts to defend ourselves. But how many of us could actually do this? It is not as simple and easy as we might think. To what degree could we really let go and be open? At what point would we become defensive?”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“There are many stories of people who were actually able to see the awakened state by breaking into laughter—seeing the contrast, the irony of polar situations. For instance there was the hermit whose devotee lived several miles away in a village. This devotee supported the hermit, supplying him with food and the other necessities of life. Most of the time the devotee sent his wife or daughter or son to bring the hermit his supplies; but one day the hermit heard that the donor himself was coming to see him. The hermit thought, “I must impress him, I must clean and polish the shrine objects and make the shrine very neat and my room extremely tidy.” So he cleaned and rearranged everything until his shrine looked very impressive with bowls of water and butter lamps burning brightly. And when he had finished, he sat down and began to admire the room and look around. Everything looked very neat, somehow unreal, and he saw that his shrine appeared unreal as well. Suddenly, to his surprise he realized that he was being a hypocrite. Then he went into the kitchen and got handfuls of ashes and threw them at the shrine until his room was a complete mess. When his patron came, he was extremely impressed by the natural quality of the room, by its not being tidy. The hermit could not hold himself together. He burst into laughter and said, “I tried to tidy myself and my room, but then I thought perhaps I should show it to you this way.” And so they both, patron and hermit, burst into laughter. That was a great moment of awakening for both of them.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“In Buddhism, we express our willingness to be realistic through the practice of meditation. Meditation is not a matter of trying to achieve ecstasy, spiritual bliss, or tranquillity, nor is it attempting to become a better person. It is simply the creation of a space in which we are able to expose and undo our neurotic games, our self-deceptions, our hidden fears and hopes. We provide space through the simple discipline of doing nothing. Actually, doing nothing is very difficult. At first, we must begin by approximating doing nothing, and gradually our practice will develop. So meditation is a way of churning out the neuroses of mind and using them as part of our practice.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, The Myth of Freedom and the Way of Meditation](#)

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“What about the great religious traditions, the teachings? They speak of discipline, rules and regulations. How do we reconcile these with the notion of a sense of humor?” Well, let’s examine the question properly. Are the regulations, the discipline, the practice of morality really based on the purely judgmental attitude of “good” as opposed to “bad”? Are the great spiritual teachings really advocating that we fight evil because we are on the side of light, the side of peace? Are they telling us to fight against that other “undesirable” side, the bad and the black? That is a big question. If there is wisdom in the sacred teachings, there should not be any war. As long as a person is involved with warfare, trying to defend or attack, then his action is not sacred; it is mundane, dualistic, a battlefield situation. One”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism](#)

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“and your sense of personal authenticity and power should be resolved into virtue.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Training the Mind and Cultivating Loving-Kindness](#)

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“forbearing.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Training the Mind and Cultivating Loving-Kindness](#)

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“Train in the three difficulties.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Training the Mind and Cultivating Loving-Kindness](#)

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“The situations of fear that exist in our lives provide us with stepping stones to step over our fear. On the other side of cowardice is bravery. If we step over properly, we can cross the boundary from being cowardly to being brave.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Shambhala: The Sacred Path of the Warrior](#)

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“Then you have to apply a technique or antidote to overcome it.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Training the Mind and Cultivating Loving-Kindness](#)

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“The vajrayana, or diamond vehicle, is powerful because it is derived from the tranquillity and readiness of the hinayana and the purity and soft heart of the mahayana. When students have developed those qualities, the vajrayana becomes ready to launch its diamond ship into the oceans of those who are ready for it.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, The Tantric Path of Indestructible Wakefulness \(volume 3\): The Profound Treasury of the Ocean of Dharma](#)

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“first, recognize them; second, try to overcome them; third, take a vow never to re-create such things again.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Training the Mind and Cultivating Loving-Kindness](#)

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“THE SANSKRIT WORD for meditation is dhyana; the Tibetan term is samten. Both refer to the same thing: steady mind. Mind is steady in the sense that you don’t go up when a thought goes up, and you don’t go down when it goes down, but you just watch things going either up or down. Whether good or bad, exciting, miserable, or blissful thoughts arise—whatever occurs in your state of mind, you don’t support it by having an extra commentator. The sitting practice of meditation is simple, direct, and very businesslike. You just sit and watch your thoughts go up and down. There is a physical technique in the background, which is working with the breath as it goes out and in. That provides an occupation during sitting practice. It is partly designed to occupy you so that you don’t evaluate thoughts. You just let them happen. In that environment, you can develop renunciation: you renounce extreme reactions to your thoughts. Warriors on the battlefield don’t react to success or failure. Success or failure is just regarded as another breath coming in and going out, another discursive thought coming in and going out. So the warrior is very steady. Because of that, the warrior is victorious—because victory is not particularly the aim or the goal. But the warrior can just be—as he or she is.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Ocean of Dharma: The Everyday Wisdom of Chogyam Trungpa](#)

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“tathagatagarbha.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Training the Mind and Cultivating Loving-Kindness](#)

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“I would like to devote myself to the dharma completely and fully.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Training the Mind and Cultivating Loving-Kindness](#)

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“Meditation, or samadhi, is connected with the idea of overcoming the constant search for entertainment.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, The Path of Individual Liberation \(volume 1\): The Profound Treasury of the Ocean of Dharma](#)

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“Going beyond fear begins when we examine our fear: our anxiety, nervousness, concern, and restlessness. If we look into our fear, if we look beneath its veneer, the first thing we find is sadness, beneath the nervousness. Nervousness is cranking up, vibrating, all the time. When we slow down, when we relax with our fear, we find sadness, which is calm and gentle. Sadness hits you in your heart, and your body produces a tear. Before you cry, there is a feeling in your chest and then, after that, you produce tears in your eyes. You are about to produce rain or a waterfall in your eyes and you feel sad and lonely, and perhaps romantic at the same time. That is the first tip of fearlessness, and the first sign of real warriorship.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa](#)

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“[kalyanamitra].”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Training the Mind and Cultivating Loving-Kindness](#)

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“The book describes the death experience in terms of the different elements of the body, going deeper and deeper. Physically you feel heavy when the earth element dissolves into water; and when water dissolves into fire you find that the circulation begins to cease functioning. When fire dissolves into air, any feeling of warmth or growth begins to dissolve; and when air dissolves into space you lose the last feeling of contact with the physical world. Finally, when space or consciousness dissolves into the central nāḍī, there is a sense of internal luminosity, an inner glow, when everything has become completely introverted.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, The Tibetan Book of the Dead: The Great Liberation through Hearing in the Bardo](#)

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“When human beings lose their connection to nature, to heaven and earth, then they do not know how to nurture their environment or how to rule their world - which is saying the same thing. Human beings destroy their ecology at the same time that they destroy each other. From that perspective, healing our society goes hand in hand with healing our personal, elemental connection with the phenomenal world.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Shambhala: The Sacred Path of the Warrior](#)

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“You should absolutely and completely stop all six of those misinterpretations.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Training the Mind and Cultivating Loving-Kindness](#)

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“Mindlessly indulging 7.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Training the Mind and Cultivating Loving-Kindness](#)

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“Contradictions Mainly to Benefiting Oneself”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Training the Mind and Cultivating Loving-Kindness](#)

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“1. Not practicing the four dharmas of a practitioner (not returning curses for curses, anger for anger, blow for blow, or insult for insult)”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Training the Mind and Cultivating Loving-Kindness](#)

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“2. Not overcoming laziness and so forth”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Training the Mind and Cultivating Loving-Kindness](#)

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“Not abandoning obscurations to meditation”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Training the Mind and Cultivating Loving-Kindness](#)

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“Not seeking the holy dharma due to pride, laziness, and so forth”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Training the Mind and Cultivating Loving-Kindness](#)

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“4. Not correcting those who are heedless”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Training the Mind and Cultivating Loving-Kindness](#)

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“Not repaying kindness”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Training the Mind and Cultivating Loving-Kindness](#)

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“In vajrayana practice, students identify with the different styles of awakened energy by visualizing themselves as deities. These visualizations arise out of and dissolve back into emptiness.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Training the Mind and Cultivating Loving-Kindness](#)

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“reads: [1] May their evil deeds ripen in me. May all my virtue without exception ripen in them. [2] I offer all my profit and gain to sentient beings, those honorable ones; I will take on all loss and defeat. [3] May all the evil deeds and suffering of sentient beings ripen in me, and all my virtue and happiness ripen in sentient beings.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Training the Mind and Cultivating Loving-Kindness](#)

“It has been said that sleeping, dreaming, and meditating, or developing awareness, are the only states in which we do not sow further seeds of karma.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, The Tantric Path of Indestructible Wakefulness \(volume 3\): The Profound Treasury of the Ocean of Dharma](#)

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“tülkus.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Training the Mind and Cultivating Loving-Kindness](#)

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“Jamgön Kongtrül of Sechen and Khenpo Kangshar—leading teachers in the Nyingma and Kagyü lineages.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Training the Mind and Cultivating Loving-Kindness](#)

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“khenpo (master of studies).”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Training the Mind and Cultivating Loving-Kindness](#)

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“However, he expressed a conviction that, in order to take root in the West, the dharma needed to be taught free from cultural trappings and religious fascination.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Training the Mind and Cultivating Loving-Kindness](#)

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“Atiyoga: Fathomless Mind Basically speaking, neurosis is temporary and sanity is permanent. When we begin to take that attitude, we realize that our occasional freak-outs and panic and our feeling of being trapped are no longer applicable. In realizing that we are eternally free, eternally liberated, and eternally awake, we begin to experience vast mind.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, The Tantric Path of Indestructible Wakefulness \(volume 3\): The Profound Treasury of the Ocean of Dharma](#)

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“nyingje, which literally means “noble heart.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Training the Mind and Cultivating Loving-Kindness](#)

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“humility,”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Training the Mind and Cultivating Loving-Kindness](#)

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“The basic discipline of mind training or lojong is a sevenfold cleaning or processing of one’s mind.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Training the Mind and Cultivating Loving-Kindness](#)

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“If you give a gift with something behind it, with an ulterior motive that you feel good about, then you are still planting habitual patterns in the back of your mind.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, The Tantric Path of Indestructible Wakefulness \(volume 3\): The Profound Treasury of the Ocean of Dharma](#)

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“sleeping—you should always take the attitude of being of benefit to all sentient beings.”

— [Chögyam Trungpa, Training the Mind and Cultivating Loving-Kindness](#)